

NEWS RELEASE

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CaliforniaVolunteers Awarded American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Funds to Support Statewide Economic Recovery Efforts through AmeriCorps Programs

\$3.5 million grant to support expansion of three AmeriCorps programs and assist other programs with matching funds

SACRAMENTO, Calif., – California Volunteers, the state office managing programs and initiatives to increase the number of Californians engaged with service and volunteering, announced today that it has been awarded \$3.5 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. The Recovery Act funds were awarded by the federal Corporation for National and Community Service on April 30.

The \$3.5 million grant will support economic recovery efforts conducted by 11 AmeriCorps programs in California. Three existing AmeriCorps programs will use the funds to expand their activities, which will support 144 new AmeriCorps service positions. The additional eight programs will utilize the funds to replace matching funds lost as a result of the economic downturn.

"We are thrilled to receive this investment to support California's AmeriCorps programs," said Secretary of Service and Volunteering, Karen Baker. "This investment will make an immediate impact in our communities, helping our AmeriCorps programs and members serve some of the most vulnerable populations that have been adversely affected by the present economic challenges."

AmeriCorps, often referred to as the domestic Peace Corps, engages members in a year of service that meets local community needs. In exchange for their service, members receive a modest living allowance and education award. In 2008, CaliforniaVolunteers, in its role as the state service commission, supported more than 4,000 AmeriCorps members via \$26 million in grants to 50 programs statewide that address critical community needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment.

"At a time when we are facing enormous economic challenges, service and volunteering can be a part of the solution. In fact, the drive to serve is surging and it is highlighted by an increase in AmeriCorps applications nationwide," concluded Baker. "With investments such as this, we can channel California's civic energy to address pressing community needs."

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was signed into law by President Obama on February 17. It included \$89 million in AmeriCorps state and national grants and \$40 million for Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards for AmeriCorps members who complete their service to pay for college or pay back student loans.

About CaliforniaVolunteers

CaliforniaVolunteers is the state office that manages programs and initiatives to increase the number of Californians involved with service and volunteering, including the state AmeriCorps program, California Citizen Corps and the Cesar Chavez Day of Service and Learning. Through the innovative Web site, CaliforniaVolunteers.org, individuals and families can find more than 40,000 volunteer opportunities throughout the state involving the arts, education, animals, disaster preparedness, the environment and other areas of interest. Karen Baker, the nation's first state cabinet secretary of service and volunteering leads the organization and First Lady Maria Shriver serves as the honorary chairperson. For more information, please visit www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org.

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